THE

Life and Adventures

OF

John Dolben, Esq;

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Member of Parliament for the Burrough of *Lescard*, in the County of *Cornwall*, and the Person that first mov'd the Impeachment of Dr. *Henry Sacheverell* in the House of Commons; after which, he was order'd to carry it up to the House of Lords, and made one of the Managers at his Tryal, *&c.*

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BRITISH MUSEUM

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The LIFE of *John Dolben*, Esq; late Member of Parliament for the Burrough of *Leſcard* in *Cornwall*, &c.

JOHN DOLBEN, the Perſon that gives Being to the following Memoirs, was the Son of Dr. *John Dolben*, late Arch-biſhop of *York*, a Gentleman whoſe conſummate Abilities rais'd him to that Dignity, and whoſe *Probity* and try'd *Experience* in the Affairs that belong'd to his Archiepiſcopal See, (if it were poſſible to make a Compariſon) was as eminent as his *Learning*: And, as *Eagles do not beget Doves*, but Creatures of the firſt Magnitude inſpire thoſe that deſcend from 'em with a genius ſuitable to their Birth, ſo young Mr. *Dolben*, even in his Infancy, gave ſuch pregnant Proofs of his future Acquirements, as won upon his Father's natural Tenderneſs ſo much, as to place him under the Direction of one of the greateſt Inſtructors of Youth in the County, that was more immediately under his Care.

To paſs by what may ſeem impertinent to an underſtanding Reader, in the Occurrences that are more ſuitable to the Fondneſs of *Nurſes*, than to the Regards of other People; this young Gentleman, (for ſo we muſt call him) after having gone through the ſeveral Exerciſes which Proficients of that Nature qualify themſelves by, was diſmiſs'd from School, to make his Appearance in a Sphere which would recommend him more immediately to the Eye of the World, and that was the Univerſity of *Oxford*, which his Father had been an Ornament to, and which was expected ſhould have inſtill'd into him the ſame Principles and holy Reſolutions, the ſame Deſires of Good, and Abhorrence of Evil, that had been handed down to him by many illuſtrious Examples.

But here, though *College-Diſcipline* inur'd him to Practices which might have made him ſhine among the illuſtrious Characters that are deduc'd down to future Age's Imitation; though in one Senſe, he grew a perfect Maſter of Tongues and Philoſophy, that are there taught by Men who are moſt valuable amongſt them for Knowledge and Vertue; in another, he gave ſignal Inſtances, that a Youth of the brighteſt Acquirements may be miſled into, and poſſeſs'd of a Sort of Literature that would entitle

entitle him to the Approbation of another Sort of Principle and Conduct, than are neceſſary for ſuch as ought to be ſtrict Profeſſors of the Duty they owe to their Prince and Country, and are enjoin'd by the Oaths they there take, to be permanent and ſtedfaſt in.

And as there is always a Mixture of bad Men among thoſe that are conſpicuous for Loyalty and Goodneſs, ſo neither the Induſtry of his *Tutor*, nor the repeated Deſires of thoſe that wiſh'd well to him, could prevail upon him to exerciſe himſelf in the Studies (I mean thoſe of Theology) which his Father had deſign'd him for.

But as he had a natural Propenſity to *Diſputes* and *Cavils*, ſo he could not be brought over by the ſtill *Voice* of the *Goſpel*, to the Serenity of Mind that is requir'd by it, and by which the beſt of Fathers had got a *venerable Name*, and many other Emoluments.

Wherefore having determin'd *Batchelor of Arts*, and being recommended to the good old Arch-biſhop by the Head of his Colledge, as one who would make great Advances in the Law, he was ſent to the *Temple*, to ſhew that Skill in *Altercations* and *Brawls*, which, if he had thought fit, he might have ſhewn himſelf eminent for

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in the *Divinity-Schools*, under the beſt and moſt diſtinguiſhing Moderator Dr. *Jane*, that now reſts with ſuch as are truly call'd the *Saints*.

He was no ſooner plac'd in *Chambers* and *Commons* here, but the Looſe that other Gentlemen gave themſelves to Diverſions, and all other unedifying Sports, got the Aſcendant of him, and *Cook* and *Littleton* was laid aſide for the *Compleat Angler* and *Gameſter*, and he that came thither with ſo many *Advantages* of his own, made it his Endeavour to have nothing elſe to do, but to catch hold of the *Diſadvantages* of other People.

In ſhort, he was perfectly acquainted with thoſe that had the greateſt *Imperfections*, and grew into *Friendſhip* with ſuch *wicked People*, (pardon the Expreſſion) as have not even *Friendſhip* for themſelves; and having pay'd for a dear bought Experience, run himſelf under this Sort of *Eſtabliſhment*, into ſuch a *tottering* Condition, as nothing but ſome Wind-fall or other, ſome Inheritance or Patrimony could releaſe him from.

When, according to his Wiſhes, the good *old Biſhop* dy'd, and *was gather'd to his Fathers* in abundance of Years, and abundance of Wealth, and he was left wherewithal to ſhake his Elbows with,

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and to get himſelf into the *beſt* Graces of the *worſt* of Men, call'd Men of the Town, alias *Sharpers*.

Here a Man of Affluence was ſure to be welcome, and ſo he was, 'till the Dice fail'd him, and the Perſons whoſe Company he had been ſo very fond of, ſhew'd ſo little Regard to his, as made him think of looking into himſelf, and retiring elſewhere by way of Shelter and Convenience, as neither the Countenance of his Uncle, who was one of the Judges of the *Queen's-Bench*, nor the Example of his deceas'd Father, could work him up to a Temperament of Mind, which was requiſite for a Man of his Knowledge and Parts.

Some Part of his Fortune being yet left, he thought it moſt adviſeable to make the beſt of it, and take the firſt Opportunity, and Endeavour to retrieve it, by going to the *Weſt Indies*, where, by the Gift of *Perſwaſion*, which he had pay'd dearly for, he got into the good Graces of a fair Lady with a very great Fortune, who, in Proceſs of Time, was marry'd to him, and as an Acceſs to her Beauty, *endow'd him with all her bodily Goods*.

This was ſuch a Hit, as repair'd the Breaches of a broken Eſtate, and recommended him once more to the Favour and Affection of his exaſperated Relations, eſpecially

ſpecially his Uncle Judge *Dolben*, who then purpos'd to leave him a Moiety of his Eſtate, and wrote very lovingly to him to return back to his native Country, and enjoy what he had ſo happily met with in a foreign Land.

He accordingly comply'd with this wholeſome Advice, and came and ſettl'd in *England*, with his Wife and Family, with whom, and ſeveral Children, he liv'd in Wealth and Proſperity 'till his old Acquaintance got in with him again, and made it their Endeavour to bring him under his former Inconveniencies.

His old Uncle being appriz'd of this Intercourſe, and finding him deaf to all Admonitions to the contrary, and himſelf under a crazy Diſpoſition of Body, by the Means of Age, and other Infirmities, thought fit to make his Will, and before his Deceaſe, explain'd his Thoughts concerning him, in the following Manner, which is faithfully extracted from the Office in *Doctors-Commons*.

I *Did intend to have given my Nephew*, John Dolben, *five thouſand Pounds at my Death; I gave him one thouſand Pounds at his Marriage; I have given to his Daughter* Catherine, *and his Son* William, *to each of them one hundred Pounds, ſecur'd*

cur'd upon a good Fund. I am very unwilling to have ſo great a Part of that which I have gather'd together by Induſtry; (for I had ſmall Beginnings) I am, I ſay, unwilling to have it thrown away at Gaming-Houſes; therefore I give J. Dolben *no* Legacy.

But Mr. *Dolben*, whether he was poſſeſſed of larger Demeaſnes on the Account of his Marriage, than to be liable to the ſame Accidents of Fortune which he had been formerly ſubject to; or whether he had a better Inſight into Affairs from former Experience, weather'd this Storm of Indignation, and was ſo far from running out what he had, and verifying his Uncle's Predictions, that he continu'd poſſeſs'd of a plentiful Eſtate by his Lady, and had Recommendations through the Means of it, and a liberal Education, to Perſons of the firſt Rank and Quality.

Amongſt them a certain B——p, then in Hopes of a *Tranſlation*, tho' not that of *Enoch* or *Elijah*, fix'd upon him as a Perſon very worthy to repreſent the ancient Burrough of *Leſcard*, and he was return'd a Member to ſit in the enſuing Parliament, by a great Majority of Voices, and by the Conſent of ſuch Electors as could not but

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have a due Regard to ſuch a right R——d Recommendation.

Nor did he behave himſelf in the Senate otherwiſe than was expected from a Man of his Knowledge and Aſſiduity; but being a Perſon whoſe Modeſty gave way to the Zeal and Fervor of Mind which he was ſuppos'd to have for the Good of his Country, he was often made Chair-man of ſeveral Committees, which he diſcharg'd with that Fidelity as was neceſſary for a Gentleman who had ſo great and valuable a Truſt repos'd in him.

One Seſſion of Parliament was over, by her Majeſty's Prorogation, when he was call'd to another that enſu'd, and ſuch a Gentleman as he could not but have Means flung in his Way, by ſome Occaſion or other, which it was pitty he ſhould be remiſs in laying hold of, and, as ill Luck would have it for a certain Doctor that was ſuppos'd to have ſtood by heterodox Opinions, he was an Inſtrument of his being a very remarkable Head of a Committee, to his great Damage and Expence.

It relates not to the Matter in Hand to examine or dwell upon the Doctrines which were at that Time aſſerted from the Pulpit; and out of Deference to our Superiors, we are oblig'd to imagine 'em to be ſuch as our wiſe Legiſlature have voted and determin'd;

min'd; but the Gentleman whoſe Memoirs we are employ'd in, was the firſt Accuſer, and, to his Praiſe be it ſpoken, it is to him we owe, that the Doctrines of *Paſſive-Obedience* and *Non-Reſiſtance* are flung out of Doors, and the Tyrannies of Princes, who may *do Evil*, notwithſtanding an obſolete Law-Maxim, may be accountable to thoſe whom they exerciſe Dominion over, and be call'd in Queſtion by the People.

As this was an undoubted Proof of his Knowledge in our ancient Conſtitution, ſo the Gentlemen who were of the ſame *laudable* Tenets with him, voted the Doctor ſhould be impeach'd of high Crimes and Miſdemeanors, and Mr. *Dolben* had the Honour to carry the Impeachment up to the Bar of the Houſe of Lords; which Houſe took Meaſures ſuitable to the Demands of the Commons; and having taken Bail for the Doctor, a Priviledge which was deny'd the Priſoner by thoſe that impeach'd him, left it to the Commons to make good what was alledg'd againſt him; who having Notice of their Lordſhips Intentions in due Form, by two Maſters in *Chancery*, prepar'd to do it with all imaginable Vigor and Alacrity, and proceeded inſtantly to make Choice of a Committee for drawing up Articles againſt him.

The Articles were four, which were likewiſe carry'd up by Mr. *Dolben*, who was Chair-man of this Committee, and anſwer'd by Dr. *Sacheverell*, who had Time allow'd him by their Lordſhips, to put in his Reply. Upon which, it was reported by this Gentleman, who was the Mouth of the Committee, to whom it was refer'd to conſider of the ſaid Anſwer, that they had conſider'd the ſame, and that they found there were contain'd therein many Things not warranted by the Courſe of Proceedings upon Impeachments, foreign to the Charge, unbecoming a Perſon impeach'd, and plainly deſign'd to reflect upon the Honour of the Houſe of Commons, and therefore did ſubmit it as their humble Opinion, that for avoiding any Imputation of Delay, a Replication ſhould be forthwith ſent up to the Lords.

This Report was agreed to by the Houſe, and accordingly the ſame Perſon that was employ'd in carrying up the Articles to the Lords, was deputed to make 'em good, by giving them a Replication; which having been duly conſider'd by their Lordſhips, they came to a Reſolution for the Doctor's ſpeedy Tryal, and by a Meſſage to the Commons, ſent by Mr. *Holford* and Mr. *Gery*, fix'd upon the 9th Day of *February*, 170$\frac{9}{10}$, at eleven in the Forenoon, for that Solemnity;

lemnity; and acquainted them, that they would take Care that Conveniences ſhould be made at the Bar of their Houſe for the Managers, who were 19 or 20, and the ſame Gentlemen which the aforeſaid Committee were compos'd of, except an Addition of four or five more, that were made Choice of to go on with the Proſecution.

Hereupon a Motion was made, the Reſult of which was, that Mr. *Bromely* ſhould go up to the Lords, and acquaint 'em, that they reſolv'd to be preſent at the ſaid Tryal, as a Committee of the whole Houſe; which induc'd their Lordſhips to addreſs her Majeſty for a convenient Place in *Weſtminſter-hall* for that Purpoſe; the ſcaffolding of which requiring a much longer Time than the Day which their Lordſhips had appointed, made their Lordſhips poſtpone their ſitting in Judgment 'till *Saturday* the 28th of *February*, when the Doctor appear'd at the Bar with the Council for him, and Managers againſt him.

To give the Reader a Detail of the Tryal, would be encroaching upon his Province, when the Lords have order'd to print it; and it might be injurious to the Rhetorick that was ſhewn on both Sides upon this great Occaſion, ſhould I offer to write the Particulars of what was ſaid for and againſt him; I ſhall therefore content my

ſelf

ſelf with ſaying, that if the Council for the Priſoner, Sir *Simon Harcourt*, ſpoke like an Angel, the Manager againſt him, Mr. *Dolben*, did all he could to come up to that Character, tho' ſome People ſay, (and what will not ſome People take the Liberty of ſpeaking?) that this was the firſt Time he wanted Words to expreſs himſelf by, or ſtood in need of Arguments to enforce and make out what it was expected he ſhould have ſtrenuouſly maintain'd.

But this is left to the different Conjectures which Men of different Opinions form to themſelves from the Inclination which they bear to this or that Principle; and I ſhall only add, that after the Tryal had laſted ten Days, and the ſeveral Advocates on both Sides had done all that was poſſible to eſpouſe and make good the Sentiments they adher'd to, their Lordſhips were pleas'd to allow, that the Commons had made good their Articles, and afterwards ſurpriz'd the World with the *Lenity* of their Sentence, who expected a more ſevere Reſult of ſuch *high* and *vigorous* Accuſations.

Amongſt thoſe who fell ſhort of their Expectations, Mr. *Dolben* may naturally be ſuppos'd not to be the laſt; and it is not improbable, but ſuch a Diſappointment as this, after ſuch incredible Pains which he

had

had taken in ſearching *Records*, and making Enquiries into the *Fathers* and *Schoolmen*, was of ſufficient Force to work upon a Body that had been exercis'd in many other Sorts of Fatigues, and fling him into another Sort of Health, than he would in all Likelihood have enjoy'd, had his Labours been more ſucceſsful.

Whatever the Cauſe was, the Effect was a grievous Indiſpoſition of Mind and Body; and tho' I will not ſhoot out Surmizes at Random, like thoſe who aſcribe his Illneſs to a Remorſe of Conſcience, the pulling down of the *fine Clock* he preſented the Burrough of *Leſcard*, that elected him for their Member, with, the riſing of the Mob, the witthdrawing a Penſion from him of 400 *l. per Annum*, or the Ingratitude of ſome People, of whoſe Commands he had been a too diligent Obſerver; I ſhall take upon me to declare, he found it neceſſary to go out of Town when the Parliament had no farther need of his Service, and pitch'd upon *Epſom* as the Place of his Reſidence for the Summer Seaſon.

But as Cares and Diſquiets follow thoſe that are afflicted with them whitherſoever they go, and there is no riding Poſt from Vexations that keep their old Tenements, tho' he that entertains them is in Search for a new one, ſo the ſame melancholy that

fed

fed upon his Spirits in Town, gave its Attendance upon him in the Country, 'till he was forc'd to ſubmit to the great Law of Nature, and be an Inſtance of that *Paſſive-Obedience* himſelf, by a Reſignation of himſelf to the divine Diſpoſal, which he had condemn'd in others, as Death call'd him away hence to give an Account of his *Management* on *Monday* the 29th of *May*, a Day that is made illuſtrious for the *Reſtoration* of the *Royal Family*, and the *Suppreſſion* of *Republican Tenets*, ſuch as riſing in *Arms* againſt *Princes*; and at that *very Hour*, *eleven in the Forenoon*, when Dr. *Sacheverell* was order'd to attend his Tryal.

FINIS.